2005-06

Saturday, October 1, 2005
7:30 pm. MacMillan Theatre

University of Toronto Faculty of Music
Presents

University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra

Raffi Armenian, conductor

Opening Concert of The 2005 International Bach Festival at the University of Toronto

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PROGRAM

Antonio Vivaldi
1678-1741

Concerto for Four Violins in B minor
1. Allegro

Hiroko Kagawa, violin I
Patricia Ahn, violin II
Elizabeth Loewen, violin III
Allene Chomyn, violin IV

Johann Sebastian Bach
1685-1750

Concerto for Four Pianos in A minor
1. (No tempo indication)
2. Largo
3. Allegro

Midori Koga, James Parker, Cameron Stowe, Lydia Wong, pianos

- INTERMISSION -

Alban Berg
1885-1935

Violin Concerto
Andante - Allegretto
Allegro - Adagio

Scott St. John, violin

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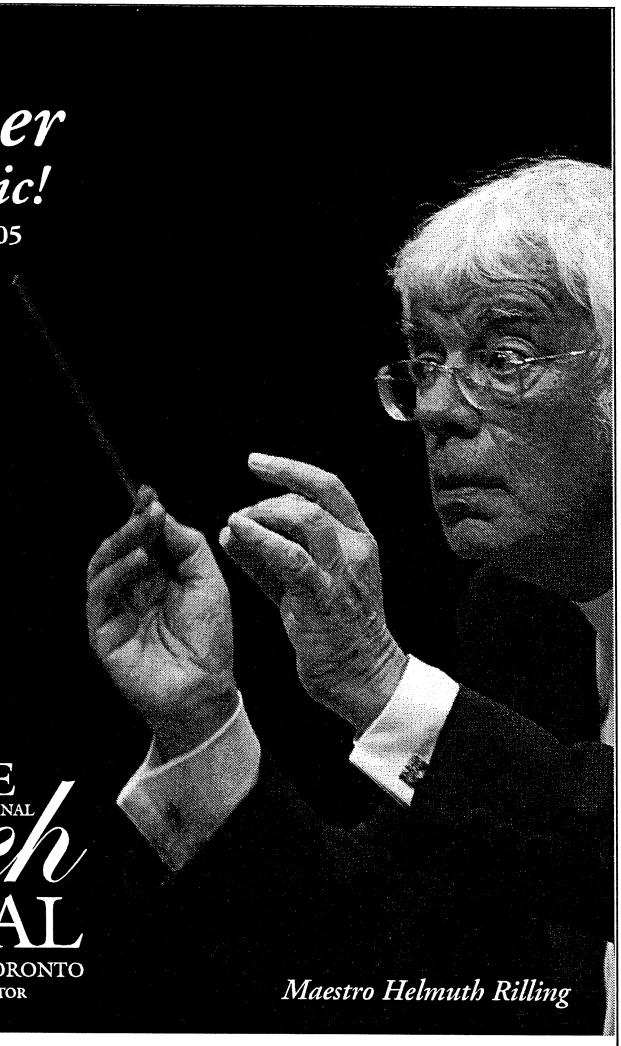

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Program Notes

Concerto for Four Violins in B minor, RV 580, First Movement
ANTONIO VIVALDI
1678-1741

The Concerto for Four Violins was published in Amsterdam in 1711 as the tenth of twelve violin concertos in the op.3 set *l'Estro Armonico* ("The Harmonic Inspiration"). The collection spread Vivaldi's fame across Europe and their formal design was highly influential among his contemporaries, including J.S. Bach, who further developed Vivaldi's innovative ideas. Vivaldi is credited, for instance, with inventing the standard three-movement fast-slow-fast concerto form and is considered the first composer to use a ritornello consistently in the fast movements of a concerto. The first movement of the B minor concerto is an *Allegro* in quasi-ritornello form: varied statements of the ritornello (refrain) in the full ensemble alternate with free episodes in the solo violins. The simplicity of the writing – usually just one or two soloists play together in the solo passages – creates a texture that is pure, open and resonant, and the steady pulse and repeated-note motive contribute to the buoyant atmosphere. Vivaldi composed over 500 concertos, including 230 for solo violin, 40 double concertos, and 30 multiple concertos. Despite the seminal role he played in elaborating the concerto form, he died a pauper and was largely forgotten until the 1930's. Perhaps Stravinsky's disparaging remark that Vivaldi wrote the same piece 500 times contributed to the Vivaldi revival: today, *The Four Seasons*, not republished until 1950, is the most recorded piece of classical music.

Concerto for Four Pianos in A minor, BWV 1065
(arrangement of Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Violins, RV 580)
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
1685-1750

Bach was an avid student of the music of his contemporaries, including Vivaldi's, which he admired a great deal. So much so in fact, that he transcribed 10 concertos by the Venetian master, including six from the op.3 set, following his 1729 appointment as director of the collegium musicum in Leipzig. In general, Bach's Concerto for Four Pianos arrangement remains faithful to the original: for one, he retains exactly the same number of bars. The right hand of the solo harpsichords corresponds to Vivaldi's solo violin parts while the left hand doubles the bass line or helps realize the harmonies. Where the character of the two versions begins to diverge is in the treatment of Vivaldi's

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thematic repeated-note figures: unidiomatic for the harpsichord, Bach translates these into arpeggios and runs. Moreover, Bach was not averse to "improving" on Vivaldi's work in the details. Perhaps finding the repetition towards the end of the first-movement *Allegro* dull, he introduces more elaborate figuration in the soloists which increases the tension leading into the final ritornello. In the second-movement *Adagio*, Bach drops the ensemble accompaniment and transfers the remarkable violin arpeggios to an even denser chordal texture in the four keyboards: the result is a kind of mass prelude. In the concluding *Allegro*, Bach embellishes in yet another way by adding a beautiful passage featuring string accompaniment in suspensions. What distinguishes Bach's arrangement is the elaborate tapestry of counterpoint. But the frequent overlaid lines in the keyboard parts occasionally obscure their individuality, and the substitution of Vivaldi's crisp and simple repeated-note motives with arpeggios, noodling and runs, transforms a transparent texture into a more complicated one. If you have ever wondered what four harpsichords sound like tinkling together, get the Naxos recording of this arrangement that also features the Vivaldi original.

Violin Concerto
ALBAN BERG
1885-1935

In February 1935, while composing his opera *Lulu*, Berg was commissioned to write a violin concerto. A few months later, the death of Manon Gropius, the 18 year-old daughter of Alma Mahler, Berg's patron, and the architect Walter Gropius, prompted Berg to dedicate the concerto "to the memory of an angel." Berg himself died in December from complications to an insect sting having never heard his concerto performed. A student of Arnold Schoenberg, Berg composed the concerto using the 12-tone technique, a system of atonal writing in which all 12 chromatic tones are considered equal. Berg's Violin Concerto stands out as the Second Viennese School's most lyrical and immediately appealing representative, perhaps because it blends romanticism with modernism. The means are simple yet ingenious: Berg accommodates traditional tonality within the 12-tone system in the design of the row itself – the row, the basic material of a 12-tone piece, is an arrangement of all 12 tones in a particular order – and by means of quotation. Berg cleverly builds his row starting on the violin's open G string, and uses minor and major triads, rounded off with part of a whole-tone scale. From this he can readily extract motives and harmonies that sound "tonal."

Rejecting traditional concerto form, Berg opts for two movements that form an arc: the first movement moves from a calm *Andante* to an *Allegretto* marked "scherzando"; the second movement reverses course, from an agitated *Allegro* to an ethereal *Adagio*. In the first-movement introduction, Berg extracts the violin's open string notes from the row to evoke a "tuning" motive. Folk tune fragments feature prominently in what follows: an Austrian folk tune, and in the livelier second part, a Viennese waltz. The second movement showcases virtuosic multiple stops and rapid passage work in the violin. The overall character is restless and marked by rhythmic angularity. A terrifying climax is resolved in the concluding *Adagio* in which the soloist introduces the melody from J.S. Bach's chorale *Es ist genug* ("It is enough"). The phrase is reprised in four clarinets that curiously sound like an organ, and in call and response fashion, the violin and clarinets elaborate the chorale. Variations on the chorale harmonies and fragments of the melody reach a lush tutti climax. The coda

gradually recedes into ethereal beauty, the Bach chorale layered with a few last rising statements of the row, ending in what might just be B-flat major.

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Robert Rival is a doctoral candidate in composition in the Faculty of Music

Biographies

Maestro **Raffi Armenian** graduated from the piano performance class of Bruno Seidlhofer at the Academy of Music in Vienna, Austria. He further studied at Imperial College, University of London, England, before completing his studies at the Vienna Academy of Music with Hans Swarowsky (orchestral conducting), Rheinhold Schmid (choral conducting) and Alfred Uhl (composition). He alsotook private voice lessons with Ferdinand Grossmann.

In 1969 Raffi Armenian immigrated to Canada, where he became Artistic Director of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony for 22 years. The Raffi Armenian Theatre in Kitchener, which he helped to design, is considered one of the best performance spaces in North America, both for its acoustics and its design features. In 1974, as Music Director of the Stratford Festival, he founded the Canadian Chamber Ensemble, which achieved international recognition with tours in North and South America, and Europe.

Raffi Armenian has guest conducted all of the major orchestras in Canada, as well as in Belgium, Italy, the United States, and the Jeunesses Musicales World Youth Orchestra. Equally at home on the operatic podium, he has conducted productions in Toronto, Montreal, Detroit, Columbus and Indiana, in a vast repertoire, including Berg's *Wozzeck* for the Canadian Opera Company, Toronto, and Stravinsky's *Rake's Progress.* From 1982 to 1985 he was Artistic Director of the Opera Studio of Opera de Montreal. In 1989, he conducted the final public appearance of the great Canadian tenor Jon Vickers, in a concert performance of Wagner's *Parsifal.* In March 2006, he will lead the University of Toronto Opera Division in four performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart.

Raffi Armenian's work has received countless honors including the Canadian Grand Prix du Disque for *Serenades*, and an Emmy Award nomination for the TV performance of Menotti's *The Medium* starring Maureen Forrester. Woody Allen used his CD *Music from Berlin in the 1920s* as background music for his film *Shadows and Fog.* He is a recipient of Honorary Doctorates from the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, and the Golden Jubilee Medal of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In 1989 he was invested into the Order of Canada.

Raffi Armenian has long been active as a pedagogue. In 1982 he became a Professor of the Orchestral Conducting Class at the Conservatoire de Musique in Montreal, a position he continues to hold. In 1997 he accepted a two-year post as Visiting Guest Professor at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, in Graz, Austria, and since September 1999 Mr. Armenian has been Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Toronto. In February 2006, Mr. Armenian will lead the Montreal Conservatoire Orchestra and the U of T Symphony Orchestra in two joint concerts in Montreal and Toronto.

A scholarship student at the University of Toronto, Korean-Canadian violinist **Patricia Yoonsun Ahn** is completing her Master of Music with Erika Raum. She earned her Bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Music studying with Scott St. John. Patricia is the recipient of the 2005

Ginny Medland Green Graduate Fellowship and the Sylvia Schwarts Fellowship, and in 2004, the Felix Galimir Chamber Music Award. She has performed in the master classes of Lorand Fenyves, Mark Fewer, Pamela Frank, Gwen Hoebig, Annalee Patipatanakoon and Sylvia Rosenberg. She has participated at the Banff Centre for three summers where she was a regular featured soloist on the Baroque Series. This year, Patricia will be featured as a soloist with Mooredale Concerts.

Alberta-born violinist **Allene Chomyn** began playing the violin at age eight. She moved to British Columbia with her family shortly thereafter and continued her studies, attending the Langley Fine Arts school in Fort Langley. She earned a Bachelor of Music in Performance with Distinction in April, 2005 from the University of Victoria, studying under Sharon Stanis and the Lafayette Quartet. She currently studies in the Master's program with Annalee Patipatanakoon at the University of Toronto.

Violinist **Hiroko Kagawa** is a student of Annalee Patipatanakoon in the Master's program. Hiroko has been an active performer before her graduate studies, performing with the Osaka Philharmonic, Kensai Philharmonic, Canadian Opera Company, the National Ballet Orchestra of Canada, Esprit Orchestra, Winnipeg Symphony, and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she was a founding member of the Atlantic String Quartet, Mondetta Ensemble, Boreas String Quartet, and was a member of the Hayashi String Quartet in her native Japan. A dedicated teacher of over 20 years, Hiroko currently teaches at the Royal Conservatory of Music. She earned her Bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Music, studying with Andrew Dawes. She

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has participated in master classes by Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Koichiro Harada, Stephen Clapp and Burton Kaplan.

Pianist **Midori Koga** joined the piano and piano pedagogy faculty at the University of Toronto in 2004. She was previously the Associate Professor of Piano, and Director of Piano Pedagogy at Michigan State University. Ms. Koga holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of British Columbia, Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Michigan, and a performance diploma from the Mozarteum Hochschule für Musik in Salzburg, Austria.

Ms. Koga has been featured as soloist, chamber musician and accompanist in music festivals at the Banff Centre, Mozarteum Sommerakademie Festspiel in Salzburg, the Al Fresno New Music Festival, the Johannesen International Festival of the Arts in B.C., the World Saxophone Congress in Valencia, Spain, and the International Computer Music Festival. She is a prize-winner in such national competitions as the Concours de Musique du Canada, and the National Graduate Artist Competition at St. Mary's College-Notre Dame.

An advocate of 20th century music, Ms. Koga commissions, performs and records with the new music ensemble QUORUM. The ensemble has performed throughout the United States, including an acclaimed debut in New York's Merkin Hall, and has held residencies at the Interlochen Center for the Arts, the John Donald Robb Composers' Symposium in New Mexico, the Akron New Music Festival, and with the Cleveland Composers Forum. She has also recorded for the Equilibrium label as a member of the Michigan Chamber Players.

An active lecturer, Ms. Koga has presented at the World Pedagogy Conference, the Music Teachers' National Association National Conference, and the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. She has been published numerous times in the American Music Teacher; the article *Music Making and Wellness Project: The Positive Effects of Music-Making on the Health and Well-being of Seniors* received the 2001 National Article of the Year Award from MTNA.

Winnipeg-born violinist **Elizabeth Loewen** is a National Scholar of the University of Toronto where she is a second year Master's student of Annalee Patipatanakoon. Prior to U of T, she participated in the Young Artists Performance Academy at the Royal Conservatory of Music, and performed with the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra. She has participated in summer programs at Banff, Orford, Domaine Forget, and Kincardine, among others. In 2002, she appeared as soloist with Jeunesse Youth Orchestra, and in the same year, toured Japan and Hong Kong as a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Elizabeth has performed in the master classes of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, Scott St. John, Pamela Frank, Laurence Lesser, Marcel St.-Cyr and Terry Helmer.

Holder of the *R.E. Edwards Chair in Piano Performance* at the Faculty of Music, pianist **James Parker** is one of Canada's most renowned artists. He has appeared in solo, chamber and orchestral concerts across Canada, the United States and Europe. Celebrated by critics, Mr. Parker has performed with every major Canadian orchestra, and has given solo recitals across North America including command performances for dignitaries and diplomats at the Canada House London, the French Embassy Ottawa, the Canadian Embassy Washington, DC, and the Canadian Consulate Chicago.

Mr. Parker achieved coast to coast recognition with his first prize win of the 1984 Eckhardt Gramatte National Music

Competition, and the Canadian recital tour that followed. He has continued to capture major prizes, including CBC Radio's 25th National Competition for Young Performers, the Juilliard Concerto Competition, and the Virginia P. Moore Award as the most promising young classical artist in Canada. In addition, he has been the recipient of scholarships, awards and grants from The Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and The Juilliard School.

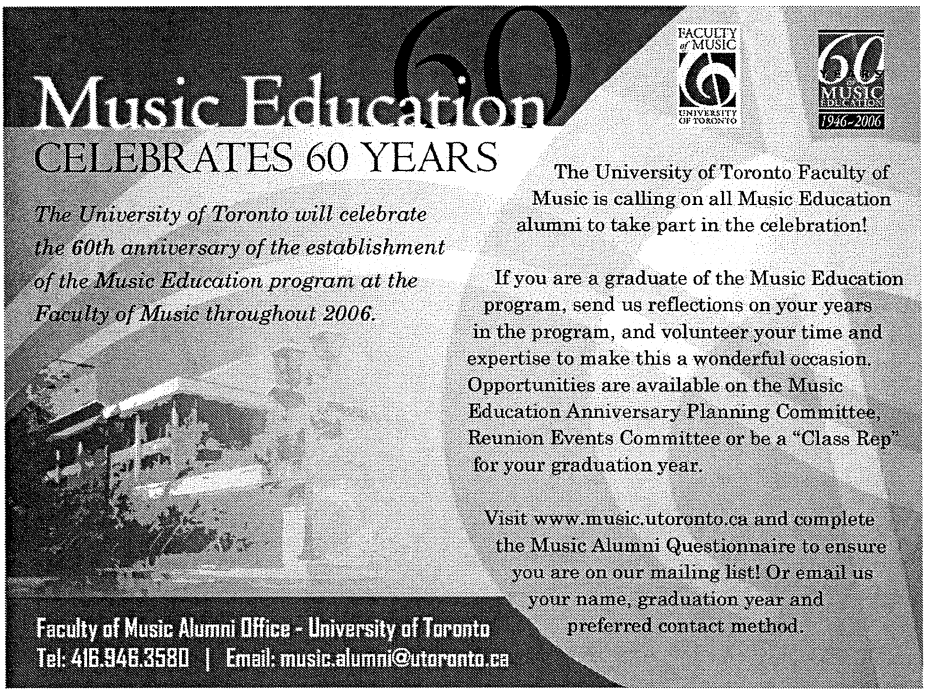
A frequent guest on both radio and television, Mr. Parker has performed on Bravo!, the CanWest Global Network, MuchMusic and WNCN in New York City. In 1992, he was the subject of a CBC television documentary on 'Adrienne Clarkson Presents' and 'Sunday Arts & Entertainment.' On recordings, Mr. Parker has numerous titles to his credit and recently received a Juno nomination for his collaboration with soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian.

Mr. Parker studied at the Vancouver Academy of Music and the University of British Columbia with Kum Sing Lee, and then went on to study with Adele Marcus at The Juilliard School in New York. Mr. Parker is a founding member of the Juno award-winning Gryphon Trio, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2003.

Scott St. John captures the attention of the musical world through his riveting and virtuosic performances on violin, and viola. As the Pittsburgh Press has noted, "he is a musician of impeccable taste and natural instincts. He lets the music do the talking." New recognition for his skill and insight came in spring 2003, when he was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant.

At the University of Toronto, Scott St. John is co-head of the String Department, Coordinator of String Chamber Music, and teaches violin and viola.

Recently, St. John was teaching in the prestigious Master Classes at the Banff Centre for the Arts, and coached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chamber music at Stanford University's St. Lawrence Quartet Institute. Performances during the past season include Calgary Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony, a Music from Marlboro tour in the United States, Scotia Festival and the Seattle Chamber Music Festival.

A champion of new music, St. John has been involved in commissioning works from Heather Schmidt, Kelly-Marie Murphy, Robert Maggio and Ray Luedecke. He played the American premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies' "A Spell for Green Corn", and frequently performs works by Thomas Ades, Jean Coulthard, Chan Ka Nin, Christos Hatzis, Glen Buhr and Gary Kulesha. New projects include collaborations with Parmela Attariwala and South African composer Bongani Ndodana.

Scott St. John's recordings can be heard on Marquis Classics, NAXOS, CRI, and Ancalagon Records. His newest release, "Salon Parisien" is on CBC records. A project to record the Brahms Sonatas for violin and viola is forthcoming.

Born in London, Ontario, St. John began his violin studies at age three with Richard Lawrence. In 1990, St. John graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied violin with David Cerone and Arnold Steinhardt, and chamber music with Felix Galimir.

American pianist **Cameron Stowe** holds a doctorate from The Juilliard School, a Master's degree from The Peabody Conservatory and a Bachelor's degree from Oberlin College Conservatory. Mr. Stowe has received much critical praise and numerous awards for his dedication to the study and performance of song and chamber music. Distinguished honors include prizes from the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition and Tanglewood Music Center, a research grant from the Theodore Presser Foundation, and the Richard F. French Doctoral Prize, Juilliard's highest academic honor.

Mr. Stowe maintains an active performance schedule as a collaborative artist, having performed recently at The Kennedy Center, Festival Radio France, Alice Tully Hall, Ravinia Festival, Stratford Festival, Boston's Gardiner Museum, Weill Recital Hall, La Jolla Chamber Music Society, Philadelphia's Academy of Music, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Asociación Cultural Humboldt in Caracas, Venezuela. He has given world premieres of songs by Victoria Bond, Daron Hagen, and Richard Pearson Thomas and he has worked closely with composers Richard Hundley and Lee Hoiby. Upcoming engagements include world premieres of works by Tobias Picker and George Tsontakis.

A dedicated educator, Mr. Stowe has presented master classes and educational programs throughout the United States. In 2004, he joined the faculty at University of Toronto to develop a new graduate program in collaborative piano and teach courses in song interpretation and ensemble performance. He continues to work as a vocal coach in New York City and spends his summer months at Ravinia Music Festival where he works with recital singers at the Steans Institute for Young Artists. This season, Mr. Stowe continues his work with Chicago Opera Theater, presenting master classes and developing a song recital series for the company's young artist program.

One of Canada's most sought after collaborative pianists, **Lydia Wong** appears regularly with the world's pre-eminent performers in venues across the globe from New York's Carnegie Recital Hall to London's Wigmore Hall.

Following her successful Banff Centre collaboration with Krzystof Penderecki on the North American premiere of his *Sextet*, Ms. Wong was invited to perform the *Sextet* and other works at the Festival

Casals in Puerto Rico and at Carnegie Hall. In 2003, with violinist Erika Raum, she gave the North American premiere of Penderecki's Violin Sonata No. 2 in Toronto. She also performed at Maestro Penderecki's 70th birthday celebration in Warsaw, Poland, and served as a jury member for the Seventh Annual International Contemporary Chamber Music Competition in Krakow, Poland. In the fall, Ms. Wong and Erika Raum will be recording all of Penderecki's work for violin and piano.

Active in new music Ms. Wong has performed as soloist with the Esprit Orchestra and can be heard on radio networks across North American, Africa and Europe. Ms. Wong's recorded performances are well-represented on CentreDiscs, Marquis Classics and Phoenix Records.

A graduate of the University of Toronto and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Ms. Wong currently teaches at the University of Toronto, and is a faculty member of the summer music program at the Banff Centre for the Arts. She has taught and performed at the Casals Festival in Prades, France.

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Please contact Marilyn Brown at 416-946-3145 if you would like to learn more about this program.